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REMARKS

The amendments herein do not introduce any new matter. Claims 175-185 and 191 are pending in the application. It is believed that the claims herein should be allowable to Applicants. Accordingly, allowance is respectfully requested.

I. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §112

The Examiner has rejected claims 175-178 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the art that the inventors at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

It appears that the Examiner is making a new matter rejection, specifically for the amended limitation “using a first subsystem for transmitting an ITR” and “using a second subsystem for responding to the ITR.” Applicants respectfully disagree. Applicants respectfully refer the Examiner to the Specification page 32 in conjunction with Fig. 1 which describes the Invitation to Respond system and the Invitation to Respond / Response database.

II. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

The Examiner has rejected claims 179-185 and 191 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,970,143 to Schneier et al. (“Schneier”). The Examiner states that Schneier discloses all of the limitations of claims 179-185 and 191.

Applicants have amended claims 179 and 191 to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which is regarded as the invention. The present

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invention is directed to a method of handling communication in a multi-player contest using multiple game servers to handle communication with the client machines. Importantly, the client machine includes a global synchronization unit (GSU) so that both time and space coordinates are absolute and can aid in providing security verification for the integrity of the game or competition.

In contrast, Schneier is directed to a remote-auditing of computer generated outcomes. Schneier does disclose a time component as part of the encoding of messages from the client to the server, however, the time component is only used as the basis for metering (or billing) purposes. There is no teaching or suggesting in Schneier for including a global synchronization unit in the client machine. Additionally, there is no teaching or suggestion in Schneier to use the absolute time and space coordinates generated by the global synchronization unit to provide security verification for the integrity of the competition.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 179 and 191 are allowable over the cited reference. Claims 180-185, by their dependency on independent claim 179, are similarly allowable.

III. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner has rejected claims 175-178 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,151,643 to Cheng et al. ("Cheng") in view of Schneier.

The Examiner states that Cheng teach a method and system for providing information for software residing on a computer. The Examiner states, however, that

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Cheng do not specifically teach that game client's response is time stamped. The Examiner states that Schneier teach a method and system for encoding a message corresponding to an outcome of a computer game wherein game client's response is time stamped. The Examiner states that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Cheng to include that the game client's response is time stamped because it would allow certifying times to completion for races of skill played on game computers which start at designated times, either in connection with a given tournament or independent thereof as specifically stated in Schneier.

Applicants have amended claim 175 to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter regarded as the invention. Claim 175 has been amended to recite that the client machine includes a global synchronization unit. The present invention, as recited in the amended claims, is directed to a method of handling communication in a multi-player contest using multiple game servers to handle communication with the client machines. Importantly, the client machine includes a global synchronization unit (GSU) so that both time and space coordinates are absolute and can aid in providing security verification for the integrity of the game or competition.

Neither Schneier nor Cheng, either alone or in combination, disclose a client which includes a global synchronization unit for providing absolute time and space references for the integrity of the game or competition. Schneier is directed to a remote-auditing of computer generated outcomes. Schneier does disclose a time component as part of the encoding of messages from the client to the server, however, the time component is only used as the basis for metering (or billing) purposes. There is no

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teaching or suggesting in Schneier for including a global synchronization unit in the client machine. Cheng is directed to the automatic updating of software on multiple client computers. There is no teaching or suggestion in Cheng for the use of a global synchronization unit in any of the client computers.

The Examiner is reminded that to establish a prima facie case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the references or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art reference (or references) must teach or suggest all of the claim limitations. In re Vaeck, 947 F.2d 488 (Fed. Cir. 1991).

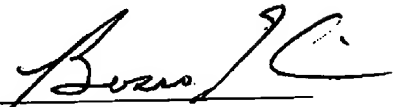
Since the cited references do not teach or suggest all of the claim limitations, either alone or in combination with each other, a prima facie case of obviousness has not been set forth. Applicants, therefore, respectfully submit that amended claim 175 is allowable over the cited references. Claims 176-178, by their dependency on amended claim 175, are similarly allowable.

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IV. Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants believe that all of the claims are now in a condition for allowance. Early notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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